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Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 13 October 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Løvald ..... (Norway)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Peacebuilding in Burundi (*continued*)

National action — International support

1. **Ms. Batumubwira** (Burundi) said that her Government pursued a policy of inclusiveness, involving people from different tribal groups, different parties, different religions and both sexes. The party in power and the opposition parties were learning what their role in a democracy should be. It was also important that civil society and the media should recognize their roles in the country's development. There were no constraints on the media; no radio station had been closed down, nor were there plans to do so. But the media should be aware of their peacebuilding responsibilities. Burundi was embarked on a common venture, which required the cooperation of all parties and dialogue among all partners, both national and international.

2. The Government was making strenuous efforts to reduce the number of weapons in circulation. Indeed, a few weeks previously an entire community had voluntarily handed in its weapons, announcing that it would be reorganizing into an organization for development. More work was still required, and a disarmament campaign would be launched. On the subject of human rights, many of the members of her delegation, including herself, had been the victims of human rights abuses in the past. The Government was doing its utmost to reduce such abuses, which did not mean that they had been totally eradicated. However, the political will existed to establish the appropriate instruments and the means to stop the abuses.

3. The new Government had done much to eliminate gender inequality. Not all women — especially those living in rural areas — had been totally empowered. But quotas were being introduced with a view to increasing the participation of women, who were being appointed to senior positions, not solely because of their gender but because they had demonstrated their capability during the 12 years of crisis, in civil society, in the media, in the political movement, and even in the guerrilla movement. In the post-independence era, women had earned the right to occupy important posts in the national and provincial Governments and at commune level and they wished to continue. Also, legislation had been drafted to give girls and boys equal rights of succession.

4. **Mr. Satti** (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi) said that the Government's peacebuilding strategy had been incorporated into the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and requested the Commission to advocate more effective funding of the PRSP. The main priorities in Burundi included democratic governance, security reform, justice and economic recovery.

5. The United Nations would be happy to attend any follow-up meetings organized by the Government with national and international stakeholders and would continue to work with all partners to assist the Commission in identifying the priorities and subsequently implementing the plan of action. The United Nations intended to continue its consultations with the Government to present concrete proposals to the Peacebuilding Commission.

6. **The Chairman** asked whether, in the light of the forthcoming report on system-wide coherence, there was sufficient coordination to help the Government on the ground.

7. **Mr. Satti** (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi) said that a forum on Burundi met regularly and engaged in information-sharing and brainstorming on how the international community could better support the Government's priorities. That information could be placed at the disposal of the Commission. Where coordination was concerned, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported the national coordination body.

8. **Mr. Valenzuela** (European Commission) said that the peacebuilding process in Burundi was still young, which meant that many pending issues and difficult challenges remained. The Commission could provide added value to that process in Burundi by helping to ensure political support, define peacebuilding strategy and build on existing instruments, such as the PRSP, and by helping the authorities to stay on course. It could also expand the donor base, a subject raised at the previous meeting by the representative of the World Bank, and help to define priorities in the areas of governance, the rule of law and socio-economic development.

9. The regional dimension — including the Great Lakes Conference and subregional efforts — also deserved consideration. Youth employment, access to resources and environmental challenges were cross-cutting issues that could affect different areas. Investment in institutions could have a multiplier effect. Donor engagement in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration also deserved high priority.

10. **Ms. Mungwa** (African Union) commended Burundi's commitment and the manner in which the Commission was conducting its discussion of the issue. The Organization of African Unity, and later the African Union, had actively participated in the peace process in Burundi.

11. The priorities mentioned by the delegation of Burundi were in line with those set out by the African Union in its policy development framework. She called on the Commission to assemble donors around specific areas crucial to countries emerging from conflict. One vital priority was the payment of salaries and pensions, lest the risk to the country's economic and political stability should have an adverse effect on the peacebuilding process. Once the Commission had determined the main priorities, the African Union would support them.

12. In addition, the African Union was working on a policy on regional and continental efforts in the context of its concessional lending facility. It was creating a standing committee to coordinate all peacebuilding activities and would work closely with the Commission. There was a need for close linkage among regional, continental and international support. The African Union had recently launched its own framework and would call on partners for help with peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

13. **Mr. Nsengimana** (Rwanda) said that, as Burundi's neighbour, Rwanda wished to see the peace in Burundi consolidated, accompanied by the economic development of its people. The country would obviously gain from the recognition and support of its neighbours. The regional context was propitious to peace, with agreements having been signed with Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes countries as a whole, which were all working together to strengthen peace in Burundi. Further actions would take advantage of that favourable context in order to consolidate the gains made.

14. Rwanda was also experiencing a post-genocidal situation, in which the Government had to reconcile conflicting priorities. It was not unusual that Burundi should be facing post-conflict challenges. What was most important was that the Government should display political will in the context of national unity, which could not be achieved unless it received substantial resources for consolidating peace and strengthening the country as a whole, to prevent a relapse into a state of conflict. It was a matter of urgency, therefore, to mobilize international support from those who were in a position to provide funds.

15. **Mr. Awad** (Egypt) said that the Commission should base its work on the priorities that the Government of Burundi had presented. It was encouraging that Burundi's vision fully coincided with that of the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Burundi, the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

16. The Commission should focus on mobilizing the resources Burundi needed to meet the complex and numerous priorities it had set for itself as soon as possible. Quick-impact projects were needed and Burundi would have to identify the specific projects most deserving of resources.

17. The Government of Egypt had already submitted specific project proposals to the Government of Burundi. The top priority, as identified in the action plans of Burundi and the United Nations, was security reform and training of the national police force, for which donor support had been lacking so far. Support was also needed for the proposal to set up a training centre for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in Burundi. Another proposal had been for health centres to provide affordable or free health care. Paying the salaries of important civil servants, such as police officers and army officers, was important in order to quell the risk of armed rebellion.

18. **Mr. García González** (El Salvador) welcomed the fact that the efforts of the Burundi Government and civil society were being supported by the international community. He was convinced that the Commission would play an active role in helping the country to fulfil its peacebuilding objectives.

19. As El Salvador knew from experience, national reconciliation was key to the peacebuilding process, as it affected the very soul and social fabric of a country. It was crucial to strengthen dialogue among political parties, civil society, churches, academia, and the parliament, a particularly useful resource. A balance should be sought between national reconciliation efforts and efforts relating to security, peacebuilding and development. In a post-conflict situation, peaceful cohabitation among citizens, based on tolerance, democracy, freedom and a culture of peace, was essential.

20. It was important to address issues relating to land, which could otherwise be a source of conflict and negatively affect the peacebuilding process. It was also extremely important to concentrate on the reinsertion of ex-combatants into civilian life and into productive life in particular and to ensure the active participation of women in peace consolidation and reconstruction processes.

21. **Mr. Malhotra** (India) said that India fully supported the national plans, policies and programmes outlined by the Government of Burundi. In order to rapidly secure peace, it was essential to focus on issues of immediate benefit to the people, such as health and education, substantive support to the National Commission on Land and Property, agriculture and DDR programmes, especially integration of ex-combatants into the country's economic and social life.

22. India would explore the provision of focused assistance in the sectors of health, through the provision of effective and affordable antiretroviral drugs, of education, through teaching tools for teachers, and of agriculture, on which the people of Burundi were highly dependent, through technology and extension programmes and promotion of agricultural export diversity. India also wished to focus on the vulnerable members of society, through programmes for civil society organizations helping street children and children who were victims of war and violence. Projects related to good governance should be submitted to the Democracy Fund, as Burundi was in need of funds.

23. The Commission should support Burundi in its visions and plans designed to have a quick and visible impact on the economic and social lives of its citizens.

24. **Mr. Christian** (Ghana) welcomed the fact that the PRSP adequately addressed the issue of poverty in Burundi.

25. Improving governance and security was paramount to enhancing peace and stability in Burundi, and ensuring that it did not fall back into another period of violence. It was essential to continue DDR efforts to assist ex-combatants. His delegation was concerned that only a limited number of persons had so far benefited from vocational training, apprenticeships and micro-projects for longer-term reintegration. Unless genuine efforts were made to train and reintegrate youths into society, unemployment and a lack of basic educational skills could cause social disruption and political instability. Efforts in relevant programmes were thus needed, in order to avoid the instability seen in Sierra Leone and other post-conflict countries.

26. The transformation of the armed forces and police into legitimate and effective institutions capable of maintaining law and order was crucial to prevent the return of violence.

27. His delegation supported the views expressed at the preceding meeting by the delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania, and urged the mobilization of resources for Burundi's National Commission on Land and Property so that it could institute land reforms and implement the land management strategy, thereby lessening land disputes and ensuring the availability of land for development.

28. **Ms. Hulan** (Canada) said that the potential domino effect of the fragility of political partnerships within the Government of Burundi was of particular concern to Canada; it was vital for the international community to help consolidate those partnerships.

29. Her delegation fully endorsed the statements made by the representatives of the United Republic of Tanzania and the European Union on transitional justice and reconciliation.

30. The Commission should promote the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as there were significant and well-known gender dimensions affecting the four pillars of peace consolidation. Women played an important role in the Arusha Peace Agreement, and women's networks had taken part in all the phases of its implementation to date. Future phases of the peace efforts in Burundi

should include women as core partners and decision makers and ensure that the unique interests and needs of women were represented in the peacebuilding process. In that regard, transitional justice issues, such as gender-based violence, reparations, economic recovery and land rights, were paramount.

31. It was particularly important to mainstream gender issues in the design and implementation of a security sector reform strategy, and particularly in efforts to reduce the number of small arms and light weapons in the country in order to prevent women from being exposed to sexual violence.

32. She would welcome a deeper and multi-faceted discussion of the gender issue at the Commission's next meeting on Burundi, and hoped that the relevant background documentation would draw on the gender expertise available in the United Nations system and in Burundi.

33. **Ms. Steele** (United States of America) said that there was clearly broad agreement on the priorities to be adopted for Burundi. She hoped that creative use would be made of available technology to allow extensive and frequent contacts in order to address those priorities.

34. **Ms. Asmady** (Indonesia) welcomed the progress being made in the peace process in Burundi and the fact that the Government of Burundi was beginning to emphasize the inclusion of all political parties in the process of recovery and consolidation.

35. The Government of Burundi must continue its efforts to build trust between the factions, since the situation was not fully stabilized and there was a risk that even seemingly harmless actions by one group could be misconstrued by another, with unintended consequences. It was particularly important for ex-combatants to be reintegrated into the fabric of society. All factions and political parties would need to be cautious and try to reach a better understanding.

36. The 2005 elections and the Arusha Peace Agreement were positive developments, which should enhance the integration of the different groups of society and create stability. The Government priorities, which should be conflict-sensitive, should guide the relevant international entities in channelling their assistance for recovery and reconstruction and international actors should actively coordinate their interventions with the Government.

37. She welcomed the finalization of the Poverty Reduction Strategy and hoped that its timely approval and implementation would facilitate the much-needed flow of funds to Burundi. Coordination with the relevant actors operating there was crucial. The Commission should provide effective guidelines to the relevant international entities so that assistance could be leveraged for optimal effect.

38. **Ms. Mladineo** (Croatia) said that the priorities for Burundi provided a framework for future action. The determination of the Government and people to achieve Burundi's stabilization was an important starting point.

39. She stressed the importance of reform of the security sector, in terms of the demobilization, employment and retraining of ex-combatants and the collection of arms. The return of refugees and reconciliation were linked to land disputes and the process would be costly and difficult. Non-governmental organizations could be very helpful in reconciliation efforts. Good governance and the transition mechanisms of the judiciary should be strengthened. The international community should focus on health and education in Burundi, in order to ensure short-term and, particularly, long-term stability. Croatia was ready to share its experience in demilitarization, the return of refugees and reconciliation in all relevant forums.

40. **Mr. Abdul Azeez** (Sri Lanka) said that support was critically needed in the areas Burundi had identified as priorities: institutional capacity-building, national reconciliation, advancing development and ensuring economic recovery, good governance and security sector reform. Such efforts should be led nationally, with the support of the international community. Equal support should be given to peacebuilding efforts, national reconciliation efforts and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. She welcomed the current approach that stakeholders in Burundi had taken towards peacebuilding, and stressed the need for continued support from the donor community, civil society and other actors in the country to ensure the country's successful transition to stability and progress.

41. **Mr. Femie** (United Kingdom) asked what support Burundi needed in order to enhance the dialogue process over the months to come. In regard to the sequenced prioritization plan, he requested clarification as to what would be an appropriate division of labour

between the international community, providing support in Burundi on the ground, and the Peacebuilding Commission in helping the Government to establish priorities. He would welcome the views of the World Bank about what the Government of Burundi should do to increase donor confidence regarding its capacity to provide budget support.

42. **Ms. Batumubwira** (Burundi) said that many forums for national dialogue already existed, such as parliament, NGOs, churches, the media and local communities. It was important for the various entities to have a better understanding of the role of each of those sectors. The political parties needed training, which certain organizations were already planning.

43. Priorities included poverty reduction and good governance. Everything depended on the latter. Without properly functioning public services and employees who received decent and regular salaries, disarmament, justice and all other projects would be illusory. The second priority was justice: if the justice system was not functioning as it should, a speedy resumption of conflict was possible. The third priority was community recovery, which meant training and work for young people, including former combatants and those who had received no education owing to the war. Such employment could be in the sector of infrastructure reconstruction. Some infrastructure projects were already under way, but more were needed. The fourth priority was the settlement of the land issue and restitution of goods for those returning from exile. If those four issues were addressed, the Peacebuilding Commission could be said to have done its job.

44. **Mr. Alba** (World Bank) said that donors would expect a system for the transparent formulation of budgets and a financial management system showing how money was being used, sector by sector. Also needed was an evaluation of the public procurement system, which should be competitive and transparent. Internal and external auditing systems were also important.

45. Donors wished to see measures of outcomes. For example, they wanted to know whether more children were going to school, or finishing primary school, as a result of their investments. For that, it was necessary to devise indicators and a system of monitoring and evaluation. The World Bank was satisfied that Burundi was making every effort in those areas and encouraged potential donors to provide budget support.

46. **Ms. Batumubwira** (Burundi) said that with the creation of the Government general inspectorate, persons applying for posts as inspectors and those already working as inspectors were required to take an examination. Although unpopular, such a step was necessary to combat corruption and hire competent employees. Also, there was a new professional organization for auditors which would do much to encourage professionalism.

47. **Mr. Gaspar Martins** (Angola) said that more information was needed about how the international community could interact with the Government and civil society to make the role of civil society as effective as possible. Angola, as a Great Lakes country, was ready to share its experience on the subject. The Peacebuilding Commission also needed information on how to work with the Government once specific projects were identified in order to make them concrete and start delivering peace dividends.

48. **Mr. Adjo-Lessing** (International Organization of la Francophonie) said that the Organization had always taken an active interest in the restoration of peace in Burundi and had made commitments to promote the rule of law, free and transparent elections, a peaceful political life, a democratic culture and full respect for human rights. It had particular skills in the areas mentioned, but wished to make its contribution part of an overall structure within the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

49. After several fact-finding missions to Burundi, the Organization had worked to build the capacity of the constitutional court through training programmes for lawyers and magistrates. It had been involved in the organization of civic education programmes for a broader public. Assistance had also been provided in the spheres of health care and schooling.

50. **Mr. Lacroix** (France) requested clarification on how the balance between journalistic ethics and development of a democratic press could be respected. He also wished to know whether training for journalists was essential or whether the creation of a better economic base or greater economic independence for press outlets was a more pressing issue. Finally, he asked whether there was an awareness among the public of the problem posed by the presence of weapons, and whether the public was

willing to participate in weapons withdrawal programmes.

51. **Ms. Batumubwira** (Burundi) said that private media were a recent development in Burundi. The media enjoyed no economic independence. There was not a single private radio station which was self-sufficient. Concerning measures to ensure that the media operated in accordance with a code of ethics, there was legislation regulating the journalism profession before the National Assembly which required journalists to meet ethical standards before obtaining press credentials. Private radio stations had arisen spontaneously in Burundi in recent years, which meant that not all journalists had received professional training or were aware of the code of ethics governing their work. Furthermore, radio stations themselves did not always meet high professional standards. The problem of independence extended to NGOs working in Burundi as well. They all required external financial assistance, which sometimes compromised their independence. The problem required a long-term solution. The independence of radio stations depended on their ability to finance their operations, through advertising revenues for example, which in turn required economic recovery.

52. With respect to disarmament, 80 per cent of the weapons distributed during the transition by the Government to individuals for their own protection had already been handed over voluntarily. The Ministry of Defence regularly provided figures on the number of weapons surrendered, which was on the rise. The number of persons who felt safe had also increased following the ceasefire agreement with Palipehutu Forces for National Liberation (PALIPEHUTU-FNL). She expected that there would be further handing over of arms in future.

53. **Mr. Ahmad** (Pakistan) said that his delegation understood fully the key challenges to peace consolidation faced by Burundi. Concerning the Chairman's summary, his delegation suggested that the appeal to the donor community to address the issue of budget support should be moved forward and listed among the critical challenges highlighted: Promoting good governance; Strengthening the rule of law and security sector; and Ensuring community recovery. Health, education and energy needs also deserved mention in the summary and might be included under the heading "Ensuring community recovery".

54. **Mr. Satti** (Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Burundi) said that his Office would be consulting with the Burundian Government on ways to support its endeavours. It stood ready to participate in any meeting which the Government might wish to organize and would continue its cooperation with the National Committee for Aid Coordination.

55. **Mr. Tarrisse da Fontoura** (Brazil) agreed with the representative of Pakistan that the issue of budget support should be mentioned among the highlighted critical challenges in the Chairman's summary.

56. **Mr. Alba** (World Bank) said that, by putting forward so many major tasks in the area of good governance for the Burundian Government to carry out at once, the Commission was setting unrealistic goals. In future, the Commission might consult the authorities to define the tasks more precisely and to set more focused priorities for good governance.

57. **Mr. Awad** (Egypt) said, with respect to the critical challenges emphasized in the summary, that there was indeed a need for prioritizing the tasks, as they would form the basis for the Commission's future work. Government experts and their partners in the Bretton Woods institutions as well as other development partners must be consulted on what was feasible. The Chairman's summary should therefore be regarded as a reflection of the current discussions. They could not constitute a platform, however, for the Government of Burundi to implement in the short term. He would welcome the views of the delegation of Burundi on the feasibility of the tasks set forth in the summary.

58. **Mr. Gaspar Martins** (Angola) said that the Chairman's summary stated clearly that the current meeting represented only the first in a series of future meetings. At those meetings, the Commission's task would be to narrow down priorities. Once those more narrowly focused priorities were defined, the World Bank, the United Nations integrated office and others should work with the Government of Burundi to implement and monitor implementation of them. He would welcome comments by the delegation of Burundi on that proposal.

59. **Ms. Batumubwira** (Burundi) said that the critical challenges outlined in the summary were indeed tremendous, but they were challenges which her Government had itself set and which the Burundian

people had trusted it to meet. Her Government would therefore make every effort to do so. Expectations were very high on the part of Burundians as well as the Commission. She noted with satisfaction that the World Bank had acknowledged that the tasks ahead were huge and that her Government could not achieve all of its goals at once. She noted with appreciation delegations' emphasis on the need for budget support, which was extremely important. It was a delicate issue, as such support was not always appropriately used. Her delegation stood ready to work with the Commission on the way in which that support was managed. Her Government would also work to ensure that the support reached its intended beneficiaries. It would be working with the United Nations integrated office on such issues, particularly through its National Committee for Aid Coordination. Lastly, she encouraged the Commission to visit Burundi.

60. **Mr. Nduwimana** (Burundi) said that his Government's expectations for the current meeting had been almost entirely met. The participants had expressed their desire to assist Burundi in building peace and promoting national reconciliation. He welcomed the establishment of the Commission, which would strengthen his Government's determination to pursue the further development of Burundi. His Government, noting the major recommendations of the Commission, assured members that it would make every possible effort to meet the goals set. When it encountered difficulties, it would request the Commission to help it to secure the necessary technical or financial assistance from bilateral and multilateral partners.

61. **The Chairman** took it that the Commission wished to advise the Secretary-General that Burundi should be considered eligible to benefit from the Peacebuilding Fund in accordance with the Fund's terms of reference.

62. *It was so decided.*

63. **The Chairman** also took it that the Commission wished to adopt his summary, amended to include the issue of budgetary support among the critical challenges highlighted therein.

64. *It was so decided.*

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.